**Washington State Department of Enterprise Services**

# ASB WEBS Enhancement

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### What goes in the Announcement of ASB?

The RCW requires the announcement of Apparent Successful Bidder. There are no further content requirements defined in statute or policy for the announcement. However, DES recommends sending at minimum bid tabulation of the evaluation scores with the announcement. The enhancement allows agencies to modify the message and send their own attachments with other relevant information to the solicitation.

### What if we are not under RCW 39.26 and we don't have to do this by law?

If the RCW regarding a notification of Apparent Successful Bidder does not apply, it is recommended to send the ASB notification as indication of award. As stated above, including this step in the process is a reminder to procurement staff to later mark the award and archive the solicitation.

### What if there is a change in ASB?

After sending an initial notification of apparent successful bidder there is an option to send additional ASB notices using the same format as the initial ASB notice. Any previous ASB notifications will be logged by the date they were sent in the solicitation results page.

### What if there is a protest which results in a different ASB?

The refreshed Complaint & Protest Policy (effective April 26, 2021), states:

Consistent with RCW 39.26.160(7), all competitive procurements must include an announcement of the ASB(s), using the state's enterprise vendor registration and bid notification system.

In the event the protest process results in a different ASB(s), the agency must include an announcement of the new ASB(s), using the state's enterprise vendor registration and bid notification system. The debrief and protest period begins again after the new ASB(s) are announced.

### How do I archive a solicitation that was cancelled?

You will be able to archive a solicitation without sending an ASB if you select "no responses, no awards" or "responses, no award" at the bottom of the page, and then "save changes". Once the page reloads from saving changes, the "archive solicitation" button will appear.

### Will the apparent successful bidders also see the comment on the apparent unsuccessful bidder notification?

The apparent successful bidder will not see any information in the second comment box which appears in the notification only for the bidders that were responsive and not marked apparent successful bidders. The ASB comments and the unsuccessful comments are separate notifications. Note: any additional emails added are only added to the ASB notification (not the unsuccessful notification) at this time.

### If we can uncheck the "Notify Apparent Unsuccessful Bidders" box, how will the unsuccessful bidders know that the debrief/protest period has started?

Sending the ASB notification is required to be sent to all responsive bidders. Unsuccessful bidders must be notified and the Notify Apparent Unsuccessful Bidders box is checked for that reason. Due to individual agency policies, there may be instances where a special notification would be sent only to successful bidders, hence the Notify Apparent Unsuccessful Bidders box.

### So If I click the notify apparent unsuccessful bidder box then click "no" for notify unsuccessful vendors of award what will the vendor actually receive?

Notifying apparent unsuccessful bidders is different than notifying unsuccessful vendors, they are different steps. The notify apparent unsuccessful bidder box only modifies the ASB notification. The notify unsuccessful vendor of award modifies the award notice.

The Awarded Column is grayed out until ASB is completed, so any notify unsuccessful vendors of award indication has no impact on the ASB notice. After you complete ASB, the Awarded section will be available to click. Then you can send out notifications for award at which point any selection in the notify apparent unsuccessful bidder has no effect on the notification for award.

### We need instructions that tell us what happens when the "Notify Apparent Unsuccessful Bidders" is unclicked.

If the notify apparent unsuccessful bidders button is unclicked, the notification will only go to the apparent successful bidders and will not be sent to any other bidder. Instructions for working around the new enhancement will be included in the user guide, these FAQs, and the communication(s).

### Where can I find the user guide?

The user guide is found on the WEBS page when you log in. On the left hand side of the screen, it will be under the "view user guides" tab.

### Do you have an updated step by step manual with the revised steps now included into one manual that we can download for future purchases?

Yes. See above.

### Is there somewhere we can see what the standard email notification looks like (if we didn't add any additional comments)?

You can preview the email notification after clicking "send ASB notification." A confirmation page will appear where you can see what the email would look like prior to sending. This will appear whether you add additional comments or not. You can also preview the notification template in the user guide.

### If you check notify apparent unsuccessful bidders does that mean you are only emailing unsuccessful bidders?

No. Whether this box is checked or not, a notification will be sent to apparent successful bidders. If you select the box to notify apparent unsuccessful bidders, that means that it will be going to both.

### I didn't receive the WEBS communication, so how do I get added to the listserv?

The communication was sent to all of the customers registered in WEBS, so if someone in your office is not getting the notification, please ensure their email is set up in WEBS correctly. It may be a good idea to check your junk folder as well.

### Will WEBS record the date ASB notifications are sent?

Yes, it will show below the ASB section. Screenshots are available in the user guide.

### Is there a date column for the ASB?

No, put the date will be recorded below the table, in the ASB notification section.

### Why would an agency need to do multiple ASB notices if they are negotiating the contract before announcing? RCW 39.26.160 says to negotiate first.

There can be a missed button clicked, in case there is a protest period and secondary ASB needs to begin again, this doesn't happen often but the option is there.

### Does the RFP Coordinator receive a copy of the ASB Announcement automatically?

Yes, whoever posted the solicitation in WEBS will automatically be included on the notifications that are sent. A copy will also be stored in WEBS for recordkeeping.

### Will the solicitation detail report include the updated information?

We will need to add any new items around ASB to WEBS reports, this may not be done by the time of the enhancement but will be added shortly.

### Is there a specific date that we are required to use this new notification methodology?

Per a refresh to Enterprise Services Complaint and Protest Policy, policy number POL-DES-170-00 (all competitive procurements must include an announcement of the ASB(s) using WEBS. The effective date of this policy is April 26th. The rollout of the WEBS enhancement will go live on April 28th.

Prior to the enhancement, announcements of ASB(s) shall be conducted using alternative methods to meet the intent of the policy.

### How is award different than the ASB?

Notice of Apparent Successful Bidder is after evaluation and negotiation and starts the debrief and protest period. Notice of award is after the debrief and protest period has closed and any relevant protests have been resolved. The notice of award is when a contract is fully signed by both parties and the solicitation can be archived in WEBS.

### Are we responsible for ensuring all those who responded are in WEBS?

Agencies should ensure all vendors who responded are in WEBS. It is a vendor managed system, we encourage vendors to register themselves. WEBS is the system of record for Agencies, having a complete record showing all who responded is best, if the vendor does not register, you will need to add them as an Unregistered Vendor.

### What information is needed to add an unregistered vendor?

Vendor name, vendor FEIN, street address, first and last name, and email address.

### When we are archiving the solicitation is that when we select the awarded column?

Yes. Award happens as the contract is fully signed, completing the solicitation process and is the last step prior to archiving the solicitation. When you have a fully signed contract, that is when you mark awarded, then you can archive the solicitation.

### How can we see what vendor email is registered in the system?

If you click on the vendor in the table from the "record solicitation results page", it will pull up their current information. If you scroll to the bottom, you can see additional email addresses registered under that vendor.

## If the notify apparent unsuccessful bidder box is checked and you add email addresses, how would you identify which email addresses are for ASB versus unsuccessful bidder?

Any additional emails added using the "additional email addresses" button will only be for the ASB notification and not include the additional information in the text box for unsuccessful bidders.

## Are we now required to send both an ASB notice and Award notice through WEBS?

Yes.

## Is there a statutory, or policy level, definition of both Apparent Successful Bidder and Successful Bidders (or Awarded Bidder)?

The Contracts Management Training defines apparent successful bidders as "The lowest responsive and responsible bidder as determined by the bid evaluation process and prior to bidder negotiations."

## How do we implement this updated process to a solicitation that was posted previous to DES' announcement of new requirements (Note: The RFP included a description of the process based on the old requirements?)

Complete what is outlined in your solicitation. In the comments for the notification, include what enhancements have been made in WEBS, add that in the email.

## Why would we want to send a separate notification to apparent unsuccessful bidders?

This is an option for any special information that your agency would like to share with unsuccessful bidders.

## Bidders can protest if we did not follow our process.  If we have a solicitation currently posted, and this change will affect it, will we need to amend our solicitation to show this change to the process?

This depends on what is stated in your solicitation. You can follow your solicitation process and send an additional notification via WEBS or amend your solicitation for the ASB process. This process follows the state policy so for any conflicts you must make the determination as to which is the best option. Enterprise Services may be able to assist on the case by case basis.

## Do we need to change all our documents and policies and procedures to reflect these changes?

This enhancement only effects your documents, policies, or procedures for sending notice of apparent successful bidder. The WEBS User Guide covers the process for using WEBS to make a notice of apparent successful bidder, which should make it easy to include this step in any relevant documents, policies, or procedures.

## Who should be contacted if I have additional questions?

For questions about WEBS not covered in this document, contact WEBS Customer Service (360) 902-7400 or webscustomerservice@des.wa.gov.